Promotion of alternate energy sources

*90. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether about 70 percent of Indian Crude Oil is still imported; and

(b) the measures proposed to popularize a judicious mix of hydrocarbon and alternate energy sources like bio diesel to solve our energy demand in view of high international oil prices leading to oil crisis?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) During 2003-04, 75.6% of crude oil processed by the domestic refineries was imported.

(b) The Government has taken up a programme of part substitution of hydrocarbons with bio-fuels in a phased manner. As of now, a scheme involving supply of ethanol blended petrol has been introduced in ten States and three Union Territories. In so far as bio-diesel is concerned, field trials are being conducted by oil marketing companies using bio-diesel and diesel blend in buses, locomotive engines and passenger cars. The results are encouraging. Coal Bed Methane, gas hydrate, underground coal gasification and the use of hydrogen as a fuel for motor vehicles are some of the alternatives through which our energy requirements are being sought to be met.

Joint airlines service on international routes

†*91. SHRI R. S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to provide a joint airlines service on all international routes by merging Air India and Indian Airlines;

(b) whether Government propose to run only private airlines on all domestic routes;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) No, Sir. All airlines including Indian Airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.